

PRAISE FOR  
**alchemy**  
OF HERBS



*"In this practical book, **Rosalee de la Forêt** reintroduces us to familiar kitchen herbs and spices, helping us to see them in a new light. Through personal and intimate storytelling, she teaches how to match herbs to people effectively instead of using them as pharmaceutical alternatives. Drawn in by the abundant, delicious recipes, you may come to this book as a home chef, but you will leave as an herbalist, transformed by the power of Rosalee's alchemy."*

— Guido Masé, author of *The Wild Medicine Solution* and *DIY Bitters*

*"Alchemy of Herbs puts the power of some of the most potent herbal medicines on the planet into your hands. These medicines have been tried and tested for millennia. And now, by combining ancient wisdom with modern scientific understanding, **Rosalee de la Forêt** helps you put nature's pharmacy to work. Whether you want more energy, better digestion, deeper sleep, or to get sick less often, Alchemy of Herbs will give you the knowledge you need to restore your health and to contribute to lasting wellness.*

*At once inspirational and deeply practical, this is a book to treasure,  
and to keep close at hand for the rest of your life."*

— Ocean Robbins, co-host and CEO of The Food Revolution Network

*"It's rare to find a writer who can describe complex ideas with such clarity and skill that anyone can grasp their subject—**Rosalee de la Forêt** is one of those souls. In this book, she's broken down the energetic qualities and medicinal uses of herbs into an accessible and coherent format. If you've ever struggled with matching herbs to people—the true gift of an herbalist—Rosalee gives you the tools to understand how herbs can effectively 'nudge' the body's leanings back into a state of balance. Alchemy of Herbs contains detailed medicinal profiles, zesty recipes, and time-honored plant wisdom. The perfect makings of a top-shelf herbal book that you will treasure for years, and turn to for inspiration time and time again."*

— Juliet Blankespoor, herbalist and founder of the Chestnut School of Herbal Medicine

*"This is a wonderfully accessible guide to introducing a medicine chest of healing plants in daily life. The information is presented in a refreshingly approachable way, by an author who loves both herbs and the simple joy they bring into our lives. The abundant recipes show how to access the healing gifts of the herbs as food, created to be both delicious and efficacious. True herbalism!"*

— David Hoffmann, herbalist and author of *Medical Herbalism* and *Holistic Herbal*

*"Another green blessing of herbal information from a practicing herbalist. What a delight to look at the herbs that **Rosalee de la Forêt** loves and to encounter her avid desire to include you in the joy of herbal medicine."*

— Susun S. Weed, author of the *Wise Woman Herbal* series

"I first met **Rosalee de la Forêt** several years ago and was immediately impressed with her knowledge, passion for herbal medicine, and ability to clearly communicate this information. It turns out she is also a very good writer, and it is with great pleasure that I now hold her first book in my hands. *Alchemy of Herbs* is a wonderful introduction to 29 common herbs and spices, allowing you to understand how to use them safely and effectively for home health care, how to make your own kitchen medicines, and how to make tasty recipes so you can incorporate them into your diet."

—David Winston, RH (AHG), clinical herbalist, ethnobotanist, and  
author of *Adaptogens: Herbs for Strength, Stamina, and Stress Relief*

"So many books geared toward those just beginning to explore the world of medicinal plants offer very basic 'take this herb for that problem' information, under the assumption that the foundational underpinnings of herbalism are somehow 'too hard' for beginners to grasp. Here, in plain English, **Rosalee de la Forêt** shows us that the way that herbalists choose herbs for individual people with particular imbalances isn't some magical power or a skill attainable only by those who can devote their lives to intense study. Instead, it is rooted in common sense patterns that anyone can learn to recognize, given a model to do so. That this is done using familiar herbs and spices available to all is an invaluable bonus. A book for everyone."

— jim mcdonald, herbalist and founder of herbcraft.org

"Herbal medicine can offer so much. But where to start? How do you know what herbs are good for you, and how to separate fact from fiction? **Rosalee de la Forêt** presents an excellent approach to learning the rich world of herbs. As an experienced educator and practitioner she weaves together tradition, experience, and science to present a holistic view of each of the plants, while providing specific and practical advice for how you can bring them into your home and life. *Alchemy of Herbs* is a treasure for any health-seeker's bookshelf."

— Renee Davis, RH (AHG), founder of Goldroot Botanical Medicine

"Many books introduce readers to herbs and their activities, but **Rosalee de la Forêt** skillfully introduces people instead to herbalism—the nuanced art of matching plants to people. Drawing energetic traditions into a modern context and right into our kitchens, she provides a simple and elegant system to look beyond symptoms and generic cures and into the heart of true herbal healing."

— Larken Bunce, clinical herbalist and co-director of  
Vermont Center for Integrative Herbalism

"*Alchemy of Herbs* is a must-read for any herbalist, whether fledgling or experienced! Part reference guide, part recipe book, and part herbal, this is a book that every herbalist will reach for again and again. **Rosalee de la Forêt** has a knack for teaching others how to use herbs in the best way possible by matching people to herbs. This book is the definitive guide for the subject, giving anyone the confidence to use herbs to their fullest potential. Each chapter is engaging, relaying herbal information through a variety of anecdotal stories, scientific studies, and traditional usage, mixed with a variety of unique and inspiring recipes and gorgeous photographs. This is a book you will want to leave sitting out on your desk, coffee table, and kitchen counter, all at the same time."

— Kristine Brown, RH (AHG), herbalist and author/illustrator of *Herbal Roots Zine*

*"Alchemy of Herbs is a sensory wonder, bringing us our medicines in the most delightful and tantalizing way they can be experienced: as culinary medicines. Step away from the bottle and the capsule and experience herbs in the full richness they can offer both as medicines and as partners in a life rich with plants."*

— Bevin Clare, associate professor of Integrative Health at Maryland University  
and president of the American Herbalist Guild

*"As a French herbalist, I have a particular affinity for herbs that are both culinary and medicinal. We have a long tradition of healing food where I live in the South of France, mainly through the incorporation of aromatic herbs in our daily meals. Alchemy of Herbs is what I had been hoping for for years. Rosalee de la Forêt sends us a very important message: health does not necessarily mean yucky potions. This book brings together beautiful pictures, tasty recipes, and health recommendations from an expert healer. In a nutshell: this an invitation to cooking for a long and healthy life."*

— Christophe Bernard, founder of [AltheaProvence.com](http://AltheaProvence.com)

*"Informative, concise, knowledgeable, and generous . . . Rosalee de la Forêt's sophisticated approach and her personal experience with herbs comes through in her beautiful recipes, which eloquently combine food and herbal medicine. Keep this book on your kitchen shelf—you'll refer to it for healing and inspiration, always!"*

— John Slattery, author of *Southwest Foraging*

*"In this inspiring and practical book, Rosalee de la Forêt empowers you to awaken your senses in order to choose the best herbs for your needs. And what better way to experience the benefits and pleasures of herbs and spices than in the kitchen? Whether you're brand-new to herbs or have been using them for years, you'll love these enticing recipes for delicious drinks, everyday meals, and simple remedies."*

— Emily Han, author of *Wild Drinks & Cocktails: Handcrafted Squashes, Shrubs, Switchels, Tonics, and Infusions to Mix at Home*

*"In Alchemy of Herbs, author Rosalee de la Forêt joyously shares her deep wisdom of herbs to inspire and empower us to transform our kitchens into nature's apothecary where delicious, healing foods and herbal remedies pour forth. Golden Milk, Hawthorn Cordial, and Nettle Leaf Dukkah are just a sampling of the many tasty, curative recipes offered. She unveils the enchanting, yet readily accessible world of herbalism that makes me fall right back in love with the plant kingdom; and you will too!"*

— Dina Falconi, herbalist and author of *Foraging & Feasting: A Field Guide and Wild Food Cookbook*

*"In her wonderfully written book, Alchemy of Herbs, Rosalee de la Forêt encourages the reader to 'break free from the insanity of the One-Solution Syndrome' by choosing personalized herbal formulations based on what our own senses tell us our bodies need. What better scenario is there for using our senses to divine this knowledge than cooking with flavorful and aromatic healing herbs and spices? Self-empowerment begins in the kitchen as Rosalee tempts us with dozens of mouth-watering recipes and encourages us to 'move forward with the mind-set of an explorer.' Those new to plant-based healing as well as experienced herbalists will find that this beautifully illustrated book exemplifies the heart and soul of herbal healing through delicious food as powerful medicine."*

— Jeff Carpenter, author of *The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer: Ultimate Guide to Producing High-Quality Herbs on a Market Scale*

*“Rosalee de la Forêt has done a wonderful job of melding both the culinary and medicinal uses of herbs in a way that allows just about anyone to incorporate herbs into their daily lives. The recipes in Alchemy of Herbs are not only very appealing, but simple enough for the novice cook or herbalist. For those who are looking to spice up their lives and improve their health, I would say that this is the book for you.”*

— Natalie Vickery, herbalist and founder of [TheFamilyHerbalist.com](http://TheFamilyHerbalist.com)

*“Rosalee de la Forêt has broken down some of the more complex parts of herbal medicine into clear and straightforward pieces. It’s very practical, but not at the expense of art and beauty. This book will be a classic.”*

— Traci Picard, herbalist and founder of [FellowWorkersFarm.com](http://FellowWorkersFarm.com)

*“It’s exciting to watch more and more people becoming empowered in taking better care of themselves and their families with the use of herbs and spices. Rosalee de la Forêt shares concepts like energetics and taste in such a way that makes it easier for people to understand them, and how to find which herbs are best for them as individuals. I’m sure that this book will prove invaluable to those wishing to make that leap into feeling comfortable and confident in making herbs a part of their lives. Everyone will learn something new!”*

— Tina Sams, editor of *Essential Herbal Magazine* and author of *Healing Herbs*

*“I highly recommend Rosalee de la Forêt’s lovely collection of personal stories, recipes, and herbal information. Reading it is like working in the kitchen alongside the delightful Rosalee, whose talent and experience with herbs is expert. Her book is unique in that it explains both the chemistry and the energetics of medicinal herbs and at the same time introduces their use in a friendly and inviting way.”*

— Holly Bellebuono, author of *The Healing Kitchen* and *The Essential Herbal for Natural Health*

*“Rosalee de la Forêt’s book is an excellent introduction to the energetics and science behind the use of our most common culinary and medicinal herbs, providing the reader with a solid foundation for further learning and exploration.”*

— Todd Caldecott, Dip. C.I.H., RH (AHG), CAP (NAMA), Ayurvedic practitioner,  
medical herbalist, and author of *Food as Medicine*

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**OF HERBS**

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A large bunch of Salvia (sage) with long, green, lanceolate leaves hanging down the left side of the page.

# alchemy OF HERBS

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THAT HEAL

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## THYME AND CHERRY BARK COUGH SYRUP

This recipe is a variation of a syrup I developed for my Herbal Cold Care online course ([www.HerbalColdCare.com](http://www.HerbalColdCare.com)). It helps to stop those dry, hacking, and unproductive coughs. The marshmallow root and honey help to moisten dry tissues, and the wild cherry bark and thyme relieve the coughing reflex. Because many of the herbs in this recipe are oddly shaped, it's best to measure them by weight rather than volume.

*Yield: approximately 1¾ cups*

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1. Combine the wild cherry bark, marshmallow root, and 2 cups water in a pan. Bring to a boil, then simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes. The water should be reduced by roughly a half.
2. Remove from heat. Add the thyme and steep, covered, for 5 minutes.
3. Strain off the herbs and measure the remaining liquid. Add a half part honey and a quarter part tart cherry juice concentrate (e.g., if you have 1 cup of liquid, you would add ½ cup honey and ¼ cup tart cherry concentrate).
4. Stored in the fridge, it should last for a month. It can also be frozen for later use. If it develops mold, throw it out.
5. *To use:* Adults take 1 teaspoon every 30 minutes, or as needed. Another option for this recipe is to add a lot less honey and sip it frequently as a tea, but don't drink it all in one day; this recipe should last at least two days as a tea.

30 grams dried wild cherry bark (*Prunus serotina*)

10 grams dried marshmallow root (*Althaea officinalis*)

7 grams dried thyme leaves

½ cup honey

¼ cup tart cherry juice concentrate

## CARDAMOM CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CAKE

Chocolate lovers can celebrate this exceptionally dark chocolate mousse cake. Each bite slowly melts in your mouth while the cardamom spice enlivens the senses. This is my family's go-to dessert recipe for potlucks, and we've been asked for the recipe countless times. If you don't have a double boiler, fill a pot with 1 to 2 inches of water and place a tight-fitting bowl over the top.

*Yield: 1 9-inch cake, approximately 16 small servings (or 8 large servings)*

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Put 1 to 2 inches of water in the bottom pan of a double boiler. Melt the bittersweet chocolate and coconut oil in the top.
3. When they are melted, remove from the heat. Add the honey and cocoa powder and mix well.
4. Add the coconut milk and mix well.
5. Whisk the eggs in a small bowl. Add the whisked eggs, cardamom, and vanilla extract to the chocolate mixture and combine well.
6. Pour the mixture into a slightly oiled 9-inch pie pan.
7. Bake in oven for 30 minutes.
8. When the cake is done, the top should be cracked but the middle should still be soft and wiggly.
9. Cool overnight to allow it to set. Sprinkle with sliced almonds, if desired.
10. Sprinkle some cocoa powder on top before serving.

8 ounces bittersweet  
chocolate

1/3 cup coconut oil

1/2 cup honey

1/2 cup cocoa powder (plus  
extra, for garnish)

1 (13.5-oz.) can coconut milk

2 eggs

1 tablespoon cardamom  
powder

2 tablespoons vanilla extract

sliced almonds, for garnish  
(optional)



1 cup coarsely ground  
coffee beans

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon  
cinnamon powder

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon  
cardamom powder

cream (optional)

honey or sugar,  
to taste (optional)

## SPICED COLD-BREW COFFEE

Cold-brewed coffee makes a delicious drink that has less bitterness than traditional coffee that has been brewed with hot water. This recipe spices it up with the addition of cinnamon and cardamom. I like to keep a jar of this in the fridge for a cold coffee drink during the hot summer months.

*Yield: approximately 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  cups*

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1. Place the coarsely ground beans and spices in a 1-quart jar. Fill the jar with water and stir well. Place a lid on this and let it sit in the fridge for 12 hours.
2. Strain off the coffee and spices through a coffee filter or several layers of cheesecloth. This creates a cold brew concentrate that will last for up to a week in the fridge.
3. *To use:* When ready to drink, mix 1 part of the coffee brew with 2 parts of liquid (for example,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of cold-brew coffee with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of water). I like to add 1 part water and 1 part cream:  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of cold-brew coffee,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of water, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of cream. If desired, add sweetener and ice before serving.

## ASTRAGALUS BONE BROTH

Bone broth stock is both the secret of delicious soups and a wonderful way to get immunomodulating herbs like astragalus into your daily diet. It's high in calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, silicon, sulfur, trace minerals, chondroitin sulfates, and glucosamine. Apple cider vinegar helps draw out the minerals and calcium from the bones. Boiling the bones releases gelatin into the broth (which is why it gels slightly when cooled).

This recipe is more of a general guideline, because there are many different ways to make bone broth. It can be made in whatever quantity you like. I like to make big batches and freeze what I don't need immediately. This broth can then be the base for soups or can simply be enjoyed as is, perhaps with a bit of miso added to it. Yum!

*Yield: variable*

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Place the bones in an oven pan and roast them for 20 to 30 minutes.
2. Place the roasted bones, apple cider vinegar, onion, carrots, and astragalus in a large soup pot. Fill the pot with water and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer.
3. After a while, you will see some foam forming at the top. Gently skim this off every couple of minutes.
4. Once the broth is clear, cover the pot with a lid. Continue to simmer on low heat for 12 to 24 hours. When ready, strain and discard the solids.
5. Store the broth in the fridge or freezer until ready to use. If storing for more than 2 days, keep in the freezer.

enough chicken or beef bones  
to fill 1/3 of a large soup pot

2 tablespoons apple  
cider vinegar

1 onion, coarsely chopped  
(including skin)

2 carrots, greens removed,  
coarsely chopped

3 large handfuls of sliced  
dried astragalus root  
(approximately 2½  
ounces or 75 grams)







## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Rosalee de la Forêt, RH**, is passionate about helping people discover the world of herbalism and natural health. She is a Registered Herbalist with the American Herbalist Guild and the Education Director at LearningHerbs. She is also the author of the online courses *The Taste of Herbs*, *Herbal Cold Care*, and *Apothecary: The Alchemy of Herbs Video Companion*. When she is not immersed in herbs, you can find her taking photos of nature, kayaking with her husband, or curled up in a hammock with a good book.

See more of Rosalee's articles and recipes at [www.HerbsWithRosalee.com](http://www.HerbsWithRosalee.com) and [www.LearningHerbs.com](http://www.LearningHerbs.com).





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